



Late Backup

#117

August 2, 2012

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Mayor and Council Members

Re: Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) Funding  
in the General Obligation Bond Package

Ladies and Gentlemen:

I am writing on behalf of the ECHO Board of Directors to encourage you to include as much funding as possible for Affordable Housing in the Bond Package.

We are frequently asked about how other cities are in addressing the needs of their residents experiencing homelessness. The answer really boils down to two key ingredients: 1) dedicated funding for fighting homelessness; and 2) a large stock of Permanent Supportive Housing.

By way of example, during the trip to Miami in June, we learned they have a special tax that generates over \$17 million a year which goes into a Trust dedicated to housing and homeless services. This is an addition to the \$25 million a year in HUD Continuum of Care funding Miami receives. With over \$40 million a year to combat homelessness, Miami now has over 3,097 PSH units, with many set aside for the hardest to serve.

Without a dedicated revenue source or growing application of general funds from the City's budget, Austin's mechanism for expanding its PSH stock is through the general obligation bonds with a focus on funding PSH.

We already know that at least \$7.5M in bond funds will be needed in 2013 -2014 alone to meet the City's goal of 350 additional PSH Units by 2014 – and we will need much more to meet the actual need (1,189 units).

We support your long term commitment to PSH. It is a **cost effective and successful alternative** to more expensive and less efficacious emergency services or institutional settings.

We believe the Affordable Housing allotment needs to be as high as possible, and we encourage you to support upwards of \$110M for Affordable Housing.

Thank you.

Ed McHorse  
Board Chair